prescribed contribution. It had also recommended that the health insurance scheme should be compulsory for new Government employees who would be joining service after the introduction of the Scheme. Similarly, It had recommended that new retirees after the introduction of the insurance scheme would be covered under the scheme.

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has floated an Expression of Interest from Insurance companies providing health Insurance and health insurance Consultants for implementation of the proposed Central Government Employees and Pensioners Health Insurance Scheme (CGEPHIS) for Central Government employees and pensioners on an all India basis.

Providing lab facilities at Civil Hospital, Rohru

775. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government will consider the proposal for providing vital laboratory instruments to the Civil Hospital, Rohru in Shimla District of Himachal Pradesh;

(b) whether it is a fact that due to absence of pathological tests in the said Hospital patients are referred to Shimla; and

(c) if so, what steps will be taken to fully equip the Hospital under N.R.H.M.?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Yes. Under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), States are encouraged to include proposal for improvement of health infrastructure including proposal for providing vital laboratory instruments in their Annual Programme Implementation Plan(PIP), which are considered and approved by National Programme Coordination Committee (NPCC).

(b) No. All routine Hematological tests including Biochemistry test, HIV Tests and Test related to Sexually Transmitted Diseases are being done at Civil Hospital, Rohru in Shimla District. Besides, all facilities for testing blood in Blood Bank are available there. However, Biopsies taken by the Surgeon are being sent to Pathology Deptt. of Medical College (Indira Gandhi Medical College, Shimla) because pathological/specialized tests are done only in the Labs of Medical Colleges.

(c) The funds will be released on the recommendations of the NPCC to Government of Himachal Pradesh in case they prefer to incorporate the case of upgradation of the said hospital in their annual PIP under NRHM.

Medical treatment of BPL families

776. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether households living below the poverty level will have an access to hospitals for medical treatment; and

(b) if so, by when and to what extent and what would be the policy thereof, with time frame for implementation?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) The Government of India is committed to ensuring access to quality health care on affordable basis to all citizens of the country. Towards this goal, the Government has operationalised National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) since April 2005. The NRHM seeks to undertake wide ranging reforms in public health system to ensure access to quality health services for poor and needy patients especially in the far flung rural areas. The NRHM envisages establishment of a fully functional, decentralized health delivery system with sharp focus on intra and inter-sector convergence for optimal utilization of resources. The NRHM is being implemented from of 2005 to 2012.

NRHM provides overarching umbrella to existing National programmes of Health and Family Welfare including RCH-II, National Disease Control Programmes and Integrated disease Surveillance. Further, it addresses the issue of health in a sector-wide manner addressing sanitation and hygiene, nutrition and safe drinking water as basic determinants of good health.

The Government also provides direct financial assistance to patients who are living below poverty line and are suffering from major life threatening diseases. Under the Rastriya Arogya Nidhi, this assistance helps the patients receive medical treatment at any of the super specialty hospitals/ institutions or other Government hospitals.

Availability of Cochlear implant surgery in Government hospitals

777. SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Cochlear implant surgery for the hearing impaired is available in Central Government sponsored hospitals;

(b) if so, the details of such hospitals; and

(c) if not, whether Government is contemplating to introduce the surgery in Government hospitals to enable the needy poor to have access to it?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c) As far as Central Government Hospitals in Delhi are concerned, the cochlear implant surgery is available in Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.

The Cochiear Implant Surgery is also available at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.

Non-availability of medicines

778. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in many primary and sub-primary health centres medicines are not available all the time;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;